BISHOP'S ADDRESS
The Rt. Rev. Lyman C. Ogilby

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MISSION: PENNSYLVANIA POSSIBLE

"...united in one body by the one Spirit, that the world may believe in him whom you have sent, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord..."

- A rich and productive diversity...a wonderful unity of one Body, one Spirit, one hope in God's call...one Lord, faith, baptism -

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These words diversity and unity have become a treasured slogan for many of us. Standing within the Anglican Communion and in the Episcopal Church, here in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, we value our diversity, held together by our unity. Lots of diversity -- yet a unity. Without spelling out or identifying all that we mean by diversity in Christian mission and ministry, we must raise the question of how much diversity can or should we have to make the unity real, visible, and viable. And further, we must look at unity - not as an end or objective for Christ's mission -- but as a means to the goal of making him, God in Jesus Christ, known so that the world may believe, may know God in Jesus Christ and His hope for reconciling the world.

The Diocese of Pennsylvania -- 172 congregations, 86,000 people, several institutions and church related institutes, and a major social service agency here in the 5-county area of S.E. Pennsylvania -- represents a great diversity, and variety of people and places, and religious experience. Differences we have in the Delaware Valley -- labeled ethnic, social, linguistic, educational, economic -- in our congregations, in our neighborhoods, in towns and cities. The varieties of religious experience -- worship and witness -- just in our Christian family alone, are legion and reflect the length and breadth of Anglicanism. Sometimes this diversity appears to be so great, one wonders if there is a unity to our church life. Where is the unity, the commonality, the centrality which we treasure and celebrate?

An entity may essentially be defined in two ways. One way: by its borders, its boundaries, its perimeter. Sometimes it is difficult to locate or determine these boundary lines, which cause confusion and territorial arguments. Depending upon definitions and geography, these lines of demarcation will determine who or what is included or excluded. Another way to define a reality: by its center, and how close to or far from this central point or person will establish the locus. The Church of God is an entity which is properly described by its center. It is impossible to define exactly the boundaries of the Church, and the attempt to do so always ends in an unevangelical legalism. We know exactly who the center is for the Church, and as Christians where our focus must be: God - Father, Son, Holy Spirit. And the

Church of God in His community, and is described as the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and of which all baptized persons are members. These baptized persons are the ministers of the Church -- lay persons, deacons, priests, bishops. The ministry of all these ministers is to represent Christ and his Church and to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world. It is the duty of all these ministers to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

In a portion of the Church of God, we call a diocese where all these ministries are represented and present -- bishop, priest, deacon, lay person, that is the complete local church -- we recognize that the bishop has a particular ministry as apostle, chief priest and pastor with the responsibility of guarding the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church. The Bishop proclaims the Word of God and acts in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world, builds up the Church, and ordains others to continue Christ's ministry.

I have said many times before that Lyman Ogilby, a sinner in the process of redemption, bishop in the Church of God, cannot, by himself, possibly be this minister or carry out this Episcopal ministry in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, appropriately, adequately, extensively. I need assistance and support, advice and encouragement, from many sources, chiefly from God in Jesus Christ and from many of His ministers. But specifically, at this time and for the immediate future, we need another person in episcopal orders, another full-time bishop, and I have decided that the next bishop to be elected by this diocese should be the one to succeed me when I retire about 3 years from now. That means a bishop coadjutor.

But as we initiate the appropriate canonical process during the next few months for the election of this bishop coadjutor, gaining the required permissions, we must be very clear about what we are asking and expecting this bishop to be and do here in this diocese. We should have a good comprehensive and realistic photograph of the mission and ministry of this diocese as it is now and what it should be for the coming decade. Details as to how this diocesan profile is to be completed will be forthcoming, but this is an essential part of the process for a responsible election in the Church of God, for a bishop of Pennsylvania, one who can truly lead us with all our diversities in the unity of the Spirit of God.

A year ago at our Convention, when we initiated our Bicentennial celebration, I began the process, charging every congregation to enrich and expand its Christian life in three essential and mutually interrelated elements of Church: worship, evangelism, social action. These are the words I used:

> "I call upon every congregation and its members this 200th year to address these three components of church, taking definite and intentional steps towards this goal:
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> 1. Worship - to enhance our worship, to learn more about the holy scriptures and sacraments, the creeds, and Christian history, doctrine, and spirituality, so that we may be better informed and more disciplined Christians. I charge every congregation to participate in at least one new and additional learning experience or event this year in this area.

2. Evangelism - to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to those in our communities who are not yet members of his body or who have forgotten or fallen away from Church participation, so that every congregation may grow in membership by 10% and also correspondingly grow in our comprehension of Christian stewardship.

3. Social Action - to initiate or increase our involvement in social action, by direct personal participation and financial support, for Christian service in our local communities, in our diocese, and in the national church, strengthening these ministries which bring food to the hungry, health to the sick, and peace and justice to all. I charge every congregation to take on at least one new or additional social service activity or program during the course of this year."

The responses from the congregations to this charge this past year -- in written, summary form -- will be received at the time of the offertory and presented at the altar.

It is clear that this trilogy of worship, evangelism, and social action is a re-phrasing of the Prayer Book dictum: the Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace and love.

This is the mandate and the blue-print for our mission here in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. How are we doing with this mission in our congregations, deaneries and diocese? We must be quick to say that measuring or grading our faithfulness to Christ's mission is an impossible and inappropriate endeavor, as only God can be the judge of that. But the bishop does have a representative role here as guardian of that faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church. And the bishop does have the responsibility and privilege of visiting every congregation, agency, and institution, personally sharing Christ's ministry with all the ministers, ordained and lay, in the diocese. I trust my comments will be helpful.

1. Prayer and Worship: There is no question in my mind that we have some splendid resources in our diocese to help us individually and in our congregations with this primary activity of our Chrsitian mission, such as the Spiritual Growth Committee, the Worship Commission, the Ecumenical Commission, the Philadelphia Theological Institute, and the many learning opportunities offered by the universities and seminaries in our region. And surely our 1979 Prayer Book is one of the most comprehensive and inclusive prayer books in the Anglican Communion and is much admired by Christians of other traditions. The book itself is a principle guide for our spiritual growth and the liturgies of the Church. But there are still a few congregations in our diocese whose comprehensive use of this book has been minimal. I am sure their present faithfulness to Christ's mission, as we Anglicans understand it, is correspondingly compromised.

2. Gospel Proclamation: making known by word and deed the good news, the evangel, that God in Jesus Christ is here in the world bringing His love and life to all and that we might have it more abundantly. We Christians can rightly say that the Incarnate Lord, Jesus Christ, by his life, death, and resurrection is the gospel and is the bearer of the gospel. We, as His body, share this evangel by who we are and by what we do, and by what we do authenticates who we are.

It is very apparent that there continues to be tension between those on the one hand who see their faith as essentially concerned with the life of the spirit and regard the 'politicization of Christianity' as a grave deviation from the truth and those on the other hand who regard a purely private and 'spiritual' religion as a betrayal of the biblical revelation. We are talking about GOSPEL, the whole gospel -- word and deed, faith and works. The faithful proclamation of the gospel, the reign of God, is surely something which concerns the whole of life, and all the world.

Again, as long as this tension, even cleavage, exists in our Christian community, mistrust abounds and our mission is crippled.

3. The Promotion of justice, peace, and love: There is no question that Jesus, in his well known declaration in the Nazareth synagogue, calls us to minister to the world's ills -- the poor, the sick, the halt and blind, the prisoners and captives. But his manifesto goes behind and beyond all this misery, oppression, and injustice to its roots, sources, and causes. We cannot escape the realities of our world -- a global world -- the nuclear arms race, the growing number of refugees, hunger at home and abroad, the widening gap between the rich and poor, and the powder kegs of Central America, the Middle East, and South Africa. From the time of the Hebrew prophets to the Nazareth manifesto of proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord, the mission of God's people has always been one of summoning the nations to God's justice, peace, and love, shalom. And surely in this cause, we must continue to expand, enrich, and enhance our ecumenical and inter-religious relationships and commitments if our mission is going to be valid and effective.

Mission is prayer and worship; gospel proclamation; and the promotion of justice, peace, and love. That is mission here in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. How do we by God's grace and in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit respond to the subject, author, and source of this mission, Jesus Christ, and bring his reconciling love to our world here in this diocese? What do the people of this diocese say to that question? This is the how of mission.

My guess is that tonight, my announcement of initiating the process leading to the election of a bishop coadjutor really started the juices running. One of the quickest ways to get the attention of Episcoplians is to talk about the election or selection of their bishop. I know because I have done it twice before tonight -- in the Philippines and in South Dakota. That is not too surprising considering the name we bear; "episkope" is what we've got! But, I want this process to be positive and unifying in the spirit of our Bicentennial -- rejoicing, reviewing, renewing. We must use this time of preparation to assess and evaluate our current mission, clearly identifying the style of episcopal leadership required to move us

to the mission we must assume in the years ahead, in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. This is the primary reason that has moved me to make this announcement tonight.

I claim to be a missionary. A missionary must discern the signs of the times -- God's time, kairos . A time to come, a time to go. This is the time.

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